

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 189
By Garrett

A RESOLUTION directing the Forestry Commission to evaluate
the Southern Forest Resource Assessment
relative to forest resource issues in Tennessee.

WHEREAS, the Southern Forest Resource Assessment (SFRA) was initiated in May of
1999, for the purpose of examining the status, trends, and potential future of Southern forests;
and

WHEREAS, the SFRA was a joint project of the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and
Wildlife Service, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Tennessee Valley Authority, and
Southern States forestry, fish, and wildlife agencies; and

WHEREAS, the SFRA included the involvement of 25 research scientists, 100 peer
reviewers, and comprehensive public participation to develop a thorough description for forest
conditions and trends in the South; and

WHEREAS, the SFRA, as completed and published in January of 2003, specifically
examined a wide range of forest sustainability issues including urbanization, timber harvesting,
chip mills, forest pests, and climatic change; and

WHEREAS, the SFRA contains extensive findings regarding forest resource conditions in Tennessee, including the following significant conclusions:

1. The most significant factor influencing forest sustainability in Tennessee is the loss of forest land to urbanization, notably in Central Tennessee.
2. Chip mill technology does not threaten future timber supplies or forest health but may cause local structural change to forests and influence local economies.
3. Tennessee will experience large percentage increases in timber production with softwood growth and removal projected to be equal by 2035.
4. Insect and disease infestations will be recurring problems in the absence of adequate management activities in pine stands and sustained efforts to monitor and control Gypsy moth and oak decline in hardwood forests.
5. Demand will increase for a broad range of multiple resource benefits as access to private forest land decreases.
6. Total pine (natural, mixed, and planted) acreage in 1999 (1.5 million acres) is less than total pine acreage in 1952 (1.8 million acres).
7. Planted pine amounts to only 3 percent of the total timberland in Tennessee, but the area of pine plantations is expected to increase from 458,000 acres in 1999 to approximately 1 million acres by 2040.
8. Hardwood and natural mixed hardwood forests comprise 90 percent of the forests in Tennessee (12.4 million acres) and are expected to decline to about 10 million acres by 2040.
9. Loss and fragmentation of forest land will impact certain wildlife, particularly Neotropical migrant bird species.
10. Silviculture ranks last among twelve sources of impairment to rivers and streams.

; and

WHEREAS, the findings in the SFRA have important implications for the development of public policy priorities, initiatives, and direction; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee Forestry Commission as established in Tennessee Code Annotated Title 11, Chapter 4, Part 2, has the responsibility to (1) formulate and recommend State forestry policies to the Governor; (2) recommend to the General Assembly legislation to protect, conserve, and develop the forest resources of the State; and (3) establish State forestry policies which will enable the Division of Forestry to manage and maintain programs of fire protection, forest pest management, reforestation, landowner assistance, utilization, marketing, communications, education, and information and management of state-owned forests; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that the Tennessee Forestry Commission, in cooperation with the Department of Agriculture, shall evaluate the Southern Forest Resource Assessment relative to forest resource issues in Tennessee and develop a report containing findings and conclusions of that evaluation. The report will recommend adjustments and/or initiatives in policies and programs of the Division of Forestry, as well as legislation, as may be appropriate to address such issues.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Forestry Commission shall provide opportunities for public participation in its evaluation of the SFRA, including, but not limited to, specific efforts to incorporate input from organizations actively involved in forest resource management issues in Tennessee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Forestry Commission shall seek assistance and input from other State and Federal government agencies involved in forest resource management programs, including, but not limited to, the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency; the University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service; the University of Tennessee Department of Forestry, Wildlife, and Fisheries; the United States Forest Service; the United States Environmental Protection Agency; and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Forestry Commission and the Department of Agriculture shall submit their findings and recommendations relative to the SFRA no later than February 1, 2005, to the Governor, as well as the Chairs of the following committees of the General Assembly: Senate Commerce, Labor and Agriculture Committee, Senate Environment, Conservation and Tourism Committee, House Conservation and Environment Committee, and House Agriculture Committee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an enrolled copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Tennessee Forestry Commission and the Commissioner of Agriculture.